

August 8, 2003

Meridian Public Charter School
Robinette Breedlove, Principal
1328 Florida Avenue, NW
Washington D.C. 20009

Dear Ms. Breedlove:

We want to thank you and your staff for the effort and cooperation provided to gather the necessary information to complete the nutritional analysis of your school menu. The purpose of this School Meal Initiative (SMI) review is to measure the progress you have made in providing healthy meals that meet the USDA nutrition goals for the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs (7 CFR 210.10).

The SMI review includes checking for compliance with the meal pattern; completeness of production records; and a detailed computerized nutrient analysis of the meals you serve. It is expected that the nutrient content of your menus averaged over the course of a week be in compliance with the nutrient standards USDA has established. The assessment was made for the Traditional Meal Pattern with the nutrient standards established for grades pre-K through 6th grade.

Key highlights from your review:

- The meal pattern requirements for portion sizes and components are being met both daily and weekly.
- Documentation was available in the form of nutrition facts labels, and recipes to complete the analysis.
- Your menu has good variety during the week.

Production records with planned numbers for all menu items were not available, so estimates provided by you were used in the analysis. This does have an effect on the accuracy of the analysis of your menu. See the Plan of Action below for more information on production records and planned numbers

Overall, your menu did meet the nutrition standards; with the exception of saturated fat being slightly elevated. See the attached nutrition profile for a comparison of the nutritional analysis of your menu compared to the nutrition standards. The USDA regulations do not have specific standards for cholesterol, fiber, or sodium, but do require that over time cholesterol and sodium are lowered, and fiber is increased. Future SMI reviews of your menus will evaluate these three nutrients.

The following Plan of Action provides recommendations for modifications to enhance your record keeping and to improve the nutrition profile of your menus. Since you have your meals vended from Preferred Meals, you will need to coordinate with them to make any necessary changes.

| Plan of Action Meal Pattern and Nutrition Standards Compliance | |
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| Observations/Finding | Recommendations |
| No production records. It is a requirement of the federal regulations (7CFR 210.10 (a)(3)) to maintain production records. | Production records with planned numbers must be kept. All menu items, including varieties of milk and all condiments need to be recorded with planned, served and leftover numbers recorded. The planned number reflects an estimate of how much of each menu item is expected to be taken – if only 50 students out of 100 are expected to take mayonnaise for a sandwich, then that is the planned number that should be recorded. These records must show how the meals contribute to the required food components, and how the meals contribute to the nutrition standards. |
| Saturated Fat (SF): The combined analysis of breakfast and lunch showed SF at 10.36%. | Offering 1% white and chocolate milks, which is lower in fat than the 2% you currently offer, will reduce the SF content of your menu. |

These types of changes will help you meet the nutrition standards with all your menu planning efforts. Review the enclosed handout *Tips on Menu Modifications for Healthy School Meals* for further menu planning information. If you have any questions regarding your SMI review, please contact the State Education Office at 727-6436, or Linda Rider or Nicole Carmichael at CN Resource, 1-888-546-3273.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cynthia Bell
State Director

cc: Tuanshanita Pitman, Business Manager